

Extrâct from

"History of the Japanese People"

by Nebara K. Sekiguchi.

Generally speaking, we belong to the Mongolian race, but at the same time, we must not forget that we have also the Philipinos, Eskimos, Slavonians, and some Semitic tribes as our common ancestors. In a word, the present Japanese has descended from the Mongolian who has blood from several races. We can prove this fact by the religious beliefs, the animal-worship, nature-worship, ancestor-worshipping religion up to the great mind-worship religion.

Among these many races the most enlightened one in our ancient history was the Semitic. It is thought that our Imperial ancestors belong to this race.

There were numberless groups of inhabitants scattered here and there on the Japanese land during the pre-historic age. It is believed that many of these belong to the Mongolian race and a few of them belong to other races.

Each clan had its own ruler and its own religion. The ruler was called "Kami" as his authority was as holy as that of the god of the clan, who was also called "Kami". ("Kami" means "up").

Both the political service and the religious ceremony

were called "Matsurigoto", meaning " a festival ".

There were many families belonging to each clan each with its father or patriarch.

Besides these higher class people there were two kinds of slaves: the Tomobe and Kakibe which belonged to the clan. Then there were the Yakabe which was the name of the lower class of slaves, who belonged to each family. These were the farmers.

These slaves worked from morning till night, and they supported the lives of the upper class people. They were not treated like human beings, but more like domestic animals. They had probably been enslaved through defeat in battle.

The Japanese raised rice and ate this for their daily food, in the beginning of their historical age. Rice was also used as food by Arabians, but it was detested by the ancient Chinese.

It is said in our traditions that Toyouke-no-mikoto, one of our ancestral gods, had brought the seeds of rice to the Japanese land from Takama-ga-hara (High-heaven-field--the heavenly plain), which was thought to be in Western Asia.

Mr. S. Seki, a famous scholar of sociology, thinks that our imperial ancestors came from Persia. He says that

when they came to the land of Japan, they found other races there who were very ferocious and warlike, and which they greatly feared. Consequently, they called the land "Abad-gai-Dev" which means in the Persian language "the abode of the devil".

While the years were passing along, the word ABAD was corrupted to YAMATO, and I'DEV to IZUMO. These two names became the names of central provinces in early Japan.

(Whether this be a correct surmise or not, at any rate it is ingenious, for the sounds of B and M, and of V and M run into one another in Japanese dialects today, as also D and T and Z. Yamato is now written with characters which mean "great tranquillity" but Yamato really seems to mean Mountain-island, quite suitable for the mountainous island which is the main part of Japan; Izumo corresponds in meaning to the characters with which it is written, namely "outcoming clouds", another suitable designation for cloudy, foggy, rainy Japan. Yamato is now Nara Prefecture, and Izumo is included in Shimane Prefecture).

We read in the "Records of Ancient Matters" (Kojiki) that our ancestors circumcised their boys with the leaves of the miscanthus (a plant allied to sugarcane with sharp-edged

leaves). For this reason some think our Imperial ancestors might be Jews, who came through Europe and Persia into Japan. There are also great similarities between the family system, customs, and religion of the Jews and those of Japan. We feel as deep an interest when we read the Book of Genesis as if we were reading our own history or legend.

Though the present Shintoism in Japan is a corrupted religion, with its foundation upon polytheism, which worships not only ancestors but also animals, yet there remains some shadow of Judaism in the spirit of Shintoism.

I do not maintain that the Japanese belong to other races than the Mongolian. The great quantity of our blood is, of course, the blood of Mongolians. But I daresay that the comparatively enlightened tribes in our opening age of history belonged to other than the Mongolian. Many Japanese historians believe them to be Jewish. Present Japanese have truly mixed blood; they are a different race than the Chinese or any other nation.

Now the "Records of Ancient Matters" tell us that there are three periods in the history of Japan. In the first place there was the period of Tenjin, "Heavenly Gods". In this period our imperial ancestors lived in Takama-ga-hara, which was not exactly known to us, but to be imagined as a certain land in Western Asia. In the second place, there was

a period of Chi-jin, "Earth Gods". These gods ruled in the present land of Japan. But the land was not reigned over by only one Emperor, but by many gods. In this connection the word "Kami", "god", does not mean any spiritual being, but it means "up".

The ancient Japanese called their rulers "Kami" or "O-Kami" which meant "up".

In the third place, there was the period of Imperial reign; that is the present age. The first and second periods were not the historical periods -- they were the mythological ages. Even in the third period, it is very doubtful, during its earliest days, whether we have true stories, or fiction in the name of historical facts.

In the era of Emperor Jimmu, who sat on his throne as Yamato-Emperor, there were no written records.

While the years were passing along there appeared in the district of Yamato an influential clan whose blood-relations have been thought to belong to the Semitic race. That clan was composed of comparatively enlightened people, and their religion was the worshipping of the heavenly gods, or trees and stones.

According to the best religion of this age, the "Ameno-minakanushi-no-kami" was the father of all heavenly bodies, but he was an invisible and transcendental God. The Amaterasu

was the sun-goddess who rules over the universe in the place of the invisible God. The Izanagi and Izanami were a couple who had human forms, and who created the Japanese land in the midst of the sea.

This clan conquered other clans in war, or subdued them without fighting, and in the year 660 B.C. the Kami of this clan was declared to be the Emperor of the Yamato district.

Raising rice. This process was taught by the Imperial clan to others, and each clan made their slaves raise rice on water paddies. The eleventh Emperor had a merciful mind. He prohibited the cruel ceremony of burying slaves alive with their dead lord (Kami). He had earthenware images substituted. This was in 2 B. C.

~~Some Aspects of Japanese History~~
~~Some Sidelights on the History of Japanese Civilization~~

I

~~The Social~~

~~Economic Aspects of~~

~~Introduction~~

~~by Japan~~

~~The Adoption of Chinese and European Culture by Japan~~

Introduction

Western scholars and observers have, prevailing, depicted Japanese civilization and Japanese history in terms of two events -- its adoption of Chinese civilization in the seventh century and of Western European civilization in the nineteenth. They do not deny that the Japanese have made significant contributions of their own but they would seem to insist that these contributions were all based on what might be called "borrowed" materials. In short, Japanese civilization is declared to be fundamentally derivative. From this the corollary has been drawn, in ^{many} wide circles, that the Japanese are simply an imitative race and that this is an inherent characteristic of their mentality.

There is not the slightest justification for such a view. All civilization, except that of the Old Stone Age and the early phases of the New Stone Age are derivative and based on a new reassembly ^{age} and reworking of borrowed materials: there is no such thing as an inherent national or racial mentality. That such theories prevail today in fascist states like Germany and Italy, of course, we know, but the very fact of their having become the cornerstone of such political edifices should constitute their best refutation as a rational explanation. Unfortunately this

~~is not so and the economic-social causes that led in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to the fictitious creation of the concept of a specific national and racial mentality and consciousness, as well as to the habit of designing one people as creative and another as imitative, will doubtless still persist for some time to come.~~

No modern civilization has suffered more from such characterisations than the Japanese. For reasons not always clear, the adoption of Chinese and of Western European civilisations by the Japanese has been regarded as a reflection on the capacity of the Japanese to develop one of their own. The same accusation can, of course, be made against every major civilization since the Egyptians and Sumero-Babylonians. It is easy to understand the underlying basis for this very unjust discrimination in the case of the Japanese. We happen to possess clear-cut and definite information about the Chinese, and are actually witnesses of the Western European cultural conquest, and we forget that, since the days of the Egyptians and the Sumero-Babylonians, large scale borrowings have always presented the same phenomena. Yet in spite of the erroneous and utterly ridiculous predication of a specific national or racial genius, it is imperative for an understanding of Japanese history to attempt an explanation of these two

important events in order to clear up, if possible, some of the misconceptions that have grown up concerning the nature of its civilization.

The completeness and comparative speed with which Chinese culture⁽¹⁾ swept over Japan in the seventh and eighth

(1) There is no doubt but that Chinese and Korean influences had been seeping into Japan long before the seventh century, probably six hundred years before that time and if we assume that the first invaders of Japan--leaving aside the Ainu, of course--either came from southern China or through southern China, then we may legitimately push this Chinese influence still further back, into the neolithic age, in fact.

centuries A.D. has generally been described as due to two causes; the spread of Buddhism, and the existence, in the Japan of the seventh and eighth centuries, of a ruling caste that had adopted Chinese culture and forcibly imposed it upon the whole country. While this explanation is correct in its broad outlines, it leaves a number of vital questions unanswered. Why, for instance, did Buddhism spread so rapidly and why did the rulers of the land desire to completely reorganize their state in terms conforming to a Chinese model? No one will seriously contend that Buddhism spread because of the fascination which its doctrinal teachings exercised over the minds of the Japanese peasant. Philosophic nihilism, even when clothed in the mythological dress of successive reincarnations which were eventually

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to lead to the attainment of perfection, was not likely to appeal either to an overworked tiller of the soil or, for that matter, to a nobleman. In actual fact, of course, we know that Buddhism was at first emphatically rejected by both the rulers and the nobility. If, after this original hostile reception, it nevertheless did force its entrance into the country ^{and onto} on its amazing progress through Japan, there must have been some extraordinary reason for it. That reason seems quite apparent. Buddhism contained certain specific secondary social implications which the dominant ^{class} ~~caste~~ as well as the peasants and slaves sensed immediately. It was the recognition of these implications that led, it is safe to assume, to its initial rejection by the former and its enthusiastic reception by the latter.

What these implications were, a lineal descendant of the seventh century nobility, Sadao Araki, has only recently stated. Buddhism, he claims, teaches that nature knows no differences and that only when differences have completely disappeared can man attain to the true light, perfection and extinction. But this is nihilism, he insists, and nihilism is the denial of the essence of modernity. It is, besides, utterly untrue, he continues, for only where there are differences is there merit. (1)

(1) Appendix to O. Tanin and E. Yohan, Militarism and Fascism in Japan, New York, 1934, p.298.

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What, of course, he wishes to imply is that it is a denial of reality, of the clear-cut evidence of the senses, for this evidence of the senses should make it clear to everyone that society is and should always remain organized on a caste and class basis. Only those, therefore, who are susceptible to Marxist and revolutionary propaganda will welcome it, General Araki concludes. ^(H) But this ^{fact,} which constitutes its most serious defect for Araki and his ancestors represented, we may confidently assert, its outstanding merit in the eyes of the underprivileged peasant and slave of the eighth century. The acceptance of Buddhism was their first bid for freedom and they flocked to the new religion enthusiastically, almost frantically. The momentum of the Buddhist impact upon this ^e ^e ^{es} oppressed mass was such that the ruling caste had, within a very short time, no other alternative but to adopt Buddhism themselves and turn it, as best they could, to their own uses. This they did with great acumen and skill. It would be ridiculous to deny, of course, that other causes also conduced to its favorable reception, such ^{for instance,} as the struggle of the Emperor against the powerful local rulers, Nor do we mean to imply that a fair number of the nobility were not sincere converts to the new faith, ^{just as} and, ^{necessarily} of course, it does not follow that the peasants and slaves who embraced it were ~~necessarily~~ ^{always} acutely aware of its social import.

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The explanation I have given above seems far more adequate than those customarily advanced and it removes the phenomenon of the triumphant spread of Buddhism in Japan from the category of the miraculous, ^{and} ^{not} ~~nor~~ does it attribute its widespread acceptance there as an indication of any abnormal and racially inherent susceptibility, on the part of the Japanese, to foreign influences.

With regard to the second question, the completeness and the speed of the Chinese cultural conquest of Japan, that, likewise, it would seem, has been somewhat incorrectly stressed by most historians. To say that the ruling class simply imposed Chinese culture on the mass of the subjugated people is only the partial truth. We must again ask why should they want to? ^{do so} The answer lies, I feel, in the fact that the imposition of Chinese culture on the mass of the Japanese people represented, not so much the exercise of power possessed by an all-dominant class, ^{as} ~~but~~ the final stage ^{of} in their conquest of Japan, ^{although} of their role of invaders, which had begun centuries before. If they reorganized the state they had established ^{as well as} ~~and~~ their life, in terms of Chinese culture, this was not because of any mystical quality possessed by that culture or because imitation and lack of originality were inherent traits of the Japanese race but because the model which they adopted--the organization

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and the theory of the state as exemplified in the Tang dynasty of China (618-907)--was an almost perfect weapon for completing their conquest of Japan. Thus Chinese culture appealed to them and had value for them in their quality of invaders. ~~It was thus, let me repeat, not Chinese civilization that conquered Japan because of its intrinsic worth or superiority at all as has been always contended.~~ ^{(let me repeat) did not} The adoption of Chinese civilization was simply the means by which the Japanese overlords ~~con-~~ ^{subjugated} quered the country to which they had come as invaders not so many centuries before. On such a theory the overwhelming of the earlier Japanese civilization becomes intelligible and we no longer are forced to take refuge in the meaningless and untrue contrast of a semi-barbarian culture falling an easy prey to a higher and more sophisticated one. Such an interpretation may possibly be a terrible blow to sociologists and social psychologists but it delivers us from miracles and Hitlerian psychoses.

The conditions, social and economic, accompanying the adoption of Western European civilization are of an utterly different type from those just discussed. The time has long passed since foreign historians thought that it was sufficient simply to bring the Japanese in intimate contact with Western European civilization for them to immediately realize its superiority to their own and that

CHRISTIANITY IN JAPAN

There are many mission schools in Japan today and they are doing a fine work in training the boys and girls to become Christian young men and women. In fact, some of the great leaders of Japan today are graduates of these mission schools.

We gratefully recognize the hand of God in the life of Japan. The Christian religion in the course of half a century, has become one of the recognized religions in Japan. It was prohibited and condemned by public notices when the first missionaries arrived in 1859. Now Christianity is recognized by the Government, by the traditional religions and by the people. The property for churches and schools, for mission residences and hospitals and for other Christian uses is legally held and incorporated under Japanese law. The Christians along with Buddhists and Shintoists have their share of chaplaincies for prisons and other state institutions. The Home Department of the Government has called together for conference on a number of occasions the representatives of the three religions, Buddhism, Christianity and Shintoism. Fifty years ago the three religions would have been Buddhism, Confucianism and Shintoism, but since then Christianity has replaced Confucianism as a positive religion.

In visible results of Christianity statistics have a

place. When my father first went to Japan there were 23,000 Protestant Christians. There are now 232,000 not to mention the Roman and Greek Catholics. Since then the Protestant communion has increased tenfold while the population has doubled. It might seem discouraging to be able to report only 232,000 Protestant Christians while the population has increased by millions, but the rate of increase is much greater with the church than with the nation. The population increases about one and one quarter percent per annum. While the Protestant Church membership increases about five percent per annum. A mass movement may occur at some future time when great numbers will be admitted into the church.

Great changes have taken place in the national Japanese customs under Christian influence. Sunday has been made a legal holiday. Christmas is observed as a festival of giving by thousands in the great cities. There was a time when Christmas decorations were sold only by the Christian Literature Society but now the smallest neighborhood shops in the big cities put them on sale. The Christmas story has a fascinating appeal in the Orient.

Polygamy in the form in which it existed in Japan is dying out.

The newer day has an illustrious precedent in the imperial Court life. The Shintoists have adopted the Christian

custom of performing the marriage rite in the presence of the deity. The Women's Christian Temperance Union began a work which is now taken over almost wholly by the national organization which calls itself the "Customs Reform Society". The society does not limit itself to temperance reform, but conducts powerful campaigns for the abolition of other national evils and is one of the liveliest organizations in the nation. The same may be said of the National Temperance League, perhaps the most powerful and effective temperance organization in the world.

Along with the reform of customs, Christian influence should be credited with the inauguration of social service and philanthropy; neither of which had any place worthy of mention before Japan was opened to modern Christian missions. The Salvation Army, conducted for the most part from England, has done noteworthy work in the field of social service and received an annual grant from the Imperial household. Dr. Kagawa, by his life in the slums, has interpreted Christ's mind towards unfortunate members of society. He and other Christian leaders have been in close touch with the labor population and have done something to impart to the labor movement an appreciable Christian influence.

All sorts of Christian charities have sprung up and bring relief and blessing to the leper, the "eta" class, the

unemployed and other needy members of society. St. Luke's International medical center in Tokyo is an outstanding enterprise of the Christian movement.

Philanthropy is an increasing expression of the mind of Christ, though practised by many who are not identified with the Christian movement. The most outstanding recent instance is the thirty million Yen foundation established by the Mitsui family.

Benevolence in the Confucian sense is essentially a paternal virtue, and is exercised toward inferiors in the social organism. It does not feel compassion for the multitudes nor does it make the weak a burden of the strong as a broad principle running through all society.

Christian influence has contributed much to the State including converts in "Caesar's Household". The wives of five ministers of the present (Saito) Cabinet, including the wife of the Premier and some of the Cabinet Ministers themselves were trained in mission schools. Parliament since its organization in 1889, has not been without Christian leaders and Christian judges have been members of the Supreme Court. A wide knowledge of the Scriptures in Japan is shown by quotations from public speakers and writers. Japan's great Finance Minister, Junnosuke Inouye, in a speech at the Peers' Club just before his assassination made use of the

Scriptures when he said, "And when one member suffers, all members suffer with it". He referred to the world depression and the new dependence of the nations each upon the other. Not only the Scriptures but Christian History is widely known among the Japanese. Augustine and Calvin, Luther and Wesley, are familiar names and something is understood about their place in history.

Striking a little deeper, one will find in the less obvious realities the deep impression Christ has made upon the thought and life of Japan. The dictionaries and encyclopedias reveal this transforming influence. An intelligent Japanese man will refer to personality as if the term has been used traditionally by the Japanese, while as a matter of fact its vogue is of the very recent of origins. One cannot acquire in shops pure specimens of Japanese ceramic ware if of recent manufacture. All the current styles betray the touch of the West upon the artists designs. So it is with current ideas. Nothing is purely Oriental. A distinguished Shinto teacher in the Tokyo Imperial University expounds Shintoism as if the Kojiki were a Hegelian masterpiece.

As regards the deeper influence of Christianity upon modern Japan, the substance of the present situation was recently expressed by the former Minister of Foreign affairs Baron Shidehara who said that as Buddhism formed the spirit

of the Heian period so Christianity was the moving spirit of the recent period in Japanese History. Christianity possesses a great advantage over the traditional religions which are bound up with a passing order of society. The new Japan has created forms of national life according to Western molds by means of which Christianity finds it easy to give expression to its message. In the past the Christian religion of those molds so freely adopted by Japan as a nation has greatly affected her life. To try to bring Christianity and the traditional religions together in any syncretistic enterprise would be a hopeless undertaking. Christianity has a deep affinity with the new Japan and is the answer to its deepest need. All that Buddhism has been able to do in adjusting itself to the new order of things is to struggle against its own decadence and to copy the methods of the Christian propaganda in its own, present day activities.

Mission institutions which now occupy an established place are organs of the new Christian spirit. Christian Educational Work, the Christian Literature Society and St. Lukes Medical Center have a national prestige, a wide patronage, and a fruitfulness which no one would deny. Their position is secure and they are the instruments by which the new Japan is being formed. These outstanding institutions are deeply permeated by the Christian spirit and if they should

suffer decline through lack of funds the loss to Japan would be irreparable.

The Christian Church is becoming increasingly independent. It is far advanced in self support and possesses the spirit of initiative and apostolic zeal for the spread of the gospel. It possesses a spiritual quality that is revealed by early morning prayer meetings and other gatherings for the cultivation of the spiritual life. The Japanese Church cannot yet carry the load of institutional Christianity created by the foreign missions. Out of its own resources it cannot meet the requirements of the vast field of rural evangelism; nor can it afford at present to be cut off from the body of Christ in other lands.

In contrast to other Asiatic fields Christianity and its success in Japan has been with the middle and intellectual classes. The creation of the new Japan is to be credited very largely to middle class intellectual population from which its leaders have come in politics, in business and in education as well as in the Christian movement. It is no accidental circumstance that Christianity has displaced Confucianism for the Christian triumph has been largely with the Confucian population. The Confucian background is more like that of the Old Testament than any other in the non-Christian world. Hence the response to Christianity has its source in

the traditional background.

The national system of education had its origin with the Confucian population of Japan though projected on nation wide and popular scale with open doors to all classes. Christianity has been preeminently successful in winning converts from among the student classes. Indeed, Christianity in Japan is highly educational though not without the fervor of evangelism. The new slogan of the church is significant, sounding as it does the call of rural evangelism. At present the cities are centers of Christian activities, and Tokyo, the capital, is probably more Christian than was the city of Rome in the third century after Christ.

The depth of Christian influence consists of progress through more stages, owing to close contact with higher education than other mission fields, the higher education not only in Japan but in Western countries, resulting in a maturity of mind scarcely reached elsewhere in the mission fields. The work has passed through a great number of stages, both in thought and practical methods, than elsewhere owing partly to the quickened movement of general progress in Modern Japan. The Japanese Christian in a true sense is one with the Christian mind to the West and quickly reflects changes in Western thought and movements.

The Buddhist religion controls the masses of population

and it is into this field that Christianity now proposes to enter. The fervent evangelism permeating Christianity from the beginning in 1859 is, in part, owing to the influence of American missions; but also in part is accounted by Japanese reaction, expressing a deeper religious consciousness than that of the Confucian mind. This may have its source in part at least in Buddhist mysticism. It is an interesting fact that the Japanese Christian ministry exhibits far greater depths in prayer than in preaching. In the prayer life of the Japanese believers Christianity has reached its highest level. One often hears an extraordinary prayer by the pastor, full of spiritual depth and fervor, followed by a very dull sermon. The vocabulary of prayer molded largely by the Scriptures and especially by the Psalms is bound to be different from that of preaching in which the language of the people is used with its traditional coloring, in the use of which the Buddhists are more effective than Christian preachers. The younger generation readily understands Christian preaching and its phraseology becomes familiar to them in the schools of Japan where English is the major study. The Christian movement has, however, among its preachers a few whose work is with power.

Christian influence has produced a greater opportunity in Japan and in other Asiatic countries as well than it has

yet fulfilled. The youth trained in the schools are more open minded and are in a better position to understand Christian preaching than the first generation to which the appeal was made.

Not only in religion has Japan progressed. I can well remember the time when there were no electric lights and we had to burn kerosene lamps. I can also recall the first electric train that was run from Kobe to Osaka, about twenty miles. It was a gala occasion and thousands turned out to see the train leave.

Japan's merchant marine has grown and ranks high among the nations of the world. I remember the Canadian Pacific Steamship Company had three beautiful steamships that used to come from Vancouver to Japan and on to Manila. These ships were the most beautiful passenger ships of that day and the Japanese built three ships just like them. When the first one was put into service, however, and I saw her she looked like the Empress ships but her stacks were far too tall, and by the time she arrived in Hong Kong she had to go in to dry docks and have most of her funnels removed.

But today Japan has built in her own shipyards the finest ocean liners that you can find anywhere in the world.

The only place that Japan is the same old Japan is out in the country where foreign influence has not been felt.

Here you will find Japan just as she was when I was a boy.

In the old days you could see poverty all about you. The streets had many beggars and because some of the Americans used to give money to the poor it became common for great crowds of children and also grown ups to follow the white man around and beg for alms. The lepers were always beggars, and the bubonic plague used to come to Japan and large districts were roped off in order to combat this disease, but today they have the best medical skill and also health centers which have reduced disease to a small scale.

Translation of the First Chapter of the
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Chapter One

Age of the Gods

The foundation of our Imperial Nation, the Great Japan, was established by the Imperial Ancestress Amaterasu-Omikami. Omikami was highly virtuous, and she imparted to her people the arts of husbandry, weaving and the like. The universality of her kindness was like the shining of the sun upon everything, and because of this she is revered by all people as the Sun-Goddess.

Omikami's brother, Prince Susa-no-o, was younger than she, and his behavior was, for the most part, apt to be violent. He was chased away by the Gods, descended to Izumo, and before long subjugated that region. It is also said that he made frequent excursions to Korea. Under his son, Prince Okuninushi, his dominion extended more and more. By teaching the arts of medicine and so forth, the Prince attached himself to the people, and his influence increased greatly.

Omikami, intending her descendants to rule tranquilly, sent a messenger to Kizuki in Izumo to give instruction as to her desire. Prince Okuninushi, purposing to take counsel with his eldest son and make reply, went quickly by boat to him. Prince Koto-shiro-nushi was just then at Cape Mihono

fishing with rod and line, and his father there transmitted to him the will of Omikami and exhorted the Prince to reverentially receive the Imperial command. Thereupon this Prince Okuninushi gave up completely his dominion over the nation and withdrew himself into the Shrine at Kizuki. Since then the Prince has been revered in this shrine, and it is called the Shrine of Izumo.

After Prince Okuninushi had reverentially abdicated, Omikami's grandson, Prince Ninigi, received an oracle from Omikami asking that he confer the three sacred treasures (This chapter does not say what they are, but they are the Imperial regalia, consisting of the mirror, the sword and the jewel. These are kept at the Ancient shrine of Ise, and the Emperor goes there once a year to worship.) Then Prince Ameno-koya-nuno and Prince Futo-dama, with a great many Gods following, descended to Hiuga (i.e. Sun-Facing. Hiuga is the old name of a province in the large southwestern island, Kyushu.) Our nation, having begun with this territory, extended for three generations. The period is known as the Age of the Gods.

Thus according to the sacred decree, the Imperial line, unbroken through all the generations and transmitting the sacred treasures, has endeared itself to the people. The people, generation after generation, faithfully serve the Imperial

House, and the destiny of the nation, as time passes, flourishes. The Imperial throne is coeval with heaven and earth. For this reason our national constitution is unique amongst the peoples of the earth.

Chapter Two

The Initiation under Emperor Jimmu

The divine Prince Ninigi had descended to Hiuga, and his descendants now continued there. After a time there was a great disturbance, for there were regions afar which were as yet not under the benign influence. Jimmu Tenno, the Prince's great grandson, had removed himself to the center of the country and was tranquilly ruling all the people. He desired, however, to fulfill the will decreed by the Imperial Ancestors, so leading an army, he departed and set forth in the direction of Yamato.

The Emperor proceeded with war-like determination and advanced eastward towards the Inland sea. The passage was difficult, for at that time the sea route was not well known and the ships were imperfect. En route the hardships were excessive, and many years passed before he at length reached Naniwa. From there he planned to go into the Yamato country, but a chief called Nagasunehiko, in service to Prince Nigihayahi, ward off the Imperial army. The Emperor accordingly retired and went around the Kii region. Under the direction of Prince Michinomi, the army divided into several parts and went in. By singing war songs their morale was stimulated; they subdued certain unsubject tribes along the way and finally bore down upon Nagasunehiko.

Prince Nigihayahi who, it is said, had formerly been a subject of the Emperor, endeavored to dissuade Nagasunehiko from his opposition. He met with refusal, and since there was no alternative, slew him and submitted to the Emperor. On this account, the Emperor praising his loyalty, made much use of the Prince. The rest of the people surrendered, the Emperor pardoned them all, and thus the whole Yamato region was pacified.

Hereupon the Emperor established his throne at Mount Unebi in Kashiwara in the southeast. He erected a palace and endowed a shrine within it. He gave thanks for his rise to power and caused the people far and wide for the first time to make celebration of the Imperial accession. At this time he elevated to royal consort Princess Suzuhime, the daughter of Prince Koto-shiro-nushi.

This year was the first year of the establishment of our Empire, the year 660 prior to the Western era. Not only is our Empire thus very ancient, but we do not find in any other nation an example such as this, that the Imperial throne has continued from the first year, unchanging through the ages to the present.

The Emperors, through the family of Nakatomi, grandson of Prince Ame-no-ko-ya-nano, and the family of Imube, grandson of Prince Futodama, assured the administration of the great

responsibility of government. The family of Otemo, descended from Prince Michineomi, and the family of Monobe, descended from Prince Nigihayahi, directed the armies, and thus the Imperial line has been preserved.

Further, the Emperor recognizes and employs persons of merit, each according to his ability here or there in the government of the country, and graciously encourages industry. Therefore the people, all under the Imperial benevolence, and the foundations of our Empire, established by the Gods, become more and more firm and shall never be disturbed through thousands of generations.

Chapter Three

Establishment of the Imperial Shrine

The Goddess Amaterasu-Omikami had given her grandson the sacred mirror, telling him that when he looked thereupon it should be as seeing herself. During the generations following it was placed in a shrine and revered. When the Emperor Jimmu dwelt in Yamato he established the place of worship at Tomino Mountain. Here, solemnly revering the Imperial ancestors, he manifested such filial piety that the principle of divine worship became finally clear.

After some five hundred years when the Age of the Gods was already far in the past, the Emperor Sujin reigned tenth in the Imperial line. At this time he showed great concern for the sacred mirror, the symbol of the Sun Goddess, and for the Imperial House. Accordingly, he caused the sword of the clouds of heaven to be revered with the mirror in a special shrine.

During the time of the eleventh of the Imperial line, Emperor Suinin gave Imperial command to Princess Yamato-hime to remove the emblems to the banks of the Ise, and there by the banks of the flowing stream of the river of fifty bells to reverently build a shrine. This is the Imperial shrine of the present day.

Later when Prince Yamato-Take was subjugating the region

of Ezo, he went to worship at the Imperial shrine. He had received the sacred sword from his Imperial aunt, the Princess Yamato-hime, and by the power of it had disposed of the rebels. He called the sword the grass cutting sword and dedicated it to the shrine at Atsuta.

The Imperial Household especially worships at the Imperial shrine, and for a long time it had been used by the Imperial Princesses as a shrine of purification. Even today the chief priest is appointed by the Imperial family. Every twenty years the shrine is rebuilt, and the established manner of the ceremony of removal of the shrine has not been changed to this day.

Further, when the Emperor Sujin enshrined the sacred mirror and the sacred sword in a special shrine, he made replicas thereof, and with them placed in the shrine the sacred jewel, Yasa-kani-no-magatama. These three became the symbols of the royal line, the Three Imperial Regalias. Since the sacred mirror is preserved in the holy place within the shrine, it is, as it were, that the Emperors, generation after generation, are serving in the presence of the great God (or the Great Gods).

Our people have also had the good custom of worshipping God (or the Gods) and reverencing the ancestors. The whole nation not only shows reverence for the Imperial shrine as

pertaining to the ancestral Gods, but each person has his own tutelary God whom he worships and serves devotedly. The funeral rites of the rulers and the parents are carried out dutifully; also Imperial entombments are performed magnificently and reverently.

Even today there are often found articles, images of clay, etc. which were buried with the deceased, and these things help us to know the customs of ancient times. In those times clothing for both men and women was made of linen woven from hemp threads or from mulberry paper. They wore a sort of narrow sleeved coat and close fitting trousers and ornamented their arms and necks with beautiful jewelry. The men parted their hair left and right and tied it in bunches. The women did theirs up in top knots or else let it hang loosely. Their food vessels were of unglazed earthenware. The houses were built of untrimmed logs, the posts being set down deep in the earth and the roof covered with reeds. Farming was the principal occupation during these times, but fishing was also pursued. Life, on the whole, was very simple.

Entertained in a Japanese home. We received and returned the usual polite and profound bows of salutation at the door; then removed the shoes from our feet, as well as the hats from our heads, as entered the humble Japanese dwelling. Next we climbed a short but steep flight of stairs --- more like a ladder than a staircase --- to a little upper room of seven-and-one-half mats, with its odd little windows and sliding doors, glazed--so to speak--not with glass, but with tightly stretched white paper. This is the Japanese way of telling the size of rooms, --- seven-and-one-half mats covered, or rather, constituted the floor of this particular room. These mats, or better, these tatami, (for our word mat is not at all suitable to convey the idea of these constituent parts of a Japanese house) are heavy affairs made of a rectangular wooden frame, about six feet by three feet, and three inches thick, stuffed with rice straw, packed in tight, like hay in a bale, and covered with fine matting bound round the edges with wide black braid. These tatami resting on rough boarding constitute the floor. They are fitted very tightly together, edge to edge and are numbered on the under side, in order that each may be readily replaced after the semiannual house cleaning, at which time the whole house is turned inside out. At the

house cleaning time, there is a great display of house contents on the streets, and the air is full of the noise of the tatami being beaten, and the atmosphere has considerably more dust and fleas to the cubic inch than is usual.

It being cold weather on this occasion, --- the month of March, in the city of Tokyo --- the chilly winds easily penetrate these Japanese "band-box" or "match-box" houses (as they are called by foreigners) ---but the chilliness is partly tempered by fires of charcoal embers in small earthen jars, placed about the floor where desired. However the Japanese do not think of heating the house so much as we do. They put on about as much clothing indoors as out, and simply try to keep their hands and feet warm with the aid of these charcoal braziers. There is not the profusion of furniture we are accustomed to, not even in the homes of the wealthy. They squat upon their heels on the tatami, with perhaps a cushion under their bent legs. A small low table or two, and an artistic folding screen, perhaps, in one or two rooms, a chest or cabinet, and some scrolls on the wall, will be all the furniture. Beside this there will be an inset place with fancy little shelves containing some bric-a-brac or ancestral tablets, and other valued objects. This place, called the tokonoma, is the honorable side of the room.

As friends enter the home there are many graceful salu-

tations and honorable greetings upon hands and knees which make a foreigner feel grotesquely awkward. The Japanese in greeting bow quite low, almost, if not quite, touching the tatami with the forehead, and do this at least three times at the preliminary salutations while asking after the honorable health of the visitor and his honorable family. In the ensuing conversation, every time some complimentary remark is made there is another mutual bowing.

The Japanese do not shake hands. When they meet they bow, and as this is generally done several times, it takes time to be polite in this land of the cherry-blossoms.

Most of the ordinary class, as well as the middle and upper class Japanese, are cleanly. Their land is volcanic, and has hot springs in many parts of it; this has doubtless given the people their fondness for hot baths. It is customary to take a hot bath daily. And they take the bath far hotter than westerners generally do.

They are fond of flowers and plants. Even the poorer people with but a few square feet of an open space between their crowded dwellings, have a few plants and flowers. Their gardens are generally made to imitate the scenery of their land, with miniature mountains (Mt. Fuji figures prominently) rivers, lakes, waterfalls, bridges, pagodas, and tiny forests; also rocks and bits of sea-beach.

The tatami floors, the shoji (white paper-covered sliding doors and windows), and the karakami (decorated paper-covered sliding partitions between rooms) are generally kept spotlessly clean. Of course in homes having children, the paper covered shoji and karakami will often exhibit finger marks, and the breaks incident to youthful rompings need frequent mending.

Off the rooms are very capacious closets with sliding doors, convenient for stowing things in. Into these closets, the beds are stowed in the day time. The beds consist of heavy quilt-like things, some used under, and some over the sleeper, more or less of them according to the season of the year. As the beds are brought or rather, slid out onto the floor of the room, one may say, in accord with the rest of the oppositeness of this oriental land, that in Japan one does not "go to bed", but the "bed comes to you".

Shoes cannot be worn on the tatami-floor, either our leather style or the wooden ones of the natives, for such shoes would soon make holes in the tatami. We have to wear soft slippers indoors, or the Japanese tabi, a kind of linen slipper-sock. But bare feet is the common style of the Japanese. As their footwear consists of sandals of straw, or wooden geta---a flat wood sole set upon cross-bars of wood which rest on the ground, and held on the foot by a thong

between the great toe and the next one,--- their feet are not cramped in shoes, are exposed to the air and rain and sunshine. Thus their feet are usually in much better condition than ours. One could not make a living selling corn-plasters in Japan, amongst the yet unwesternized natives.

The Japanese language presents about the greatest difficulty for residence in this land of flowers and wonderful scenery. There is no alphabet. Instead there are two syllabaries of 48 syllables, and two principal, with three or four less used, styles of writing these syllables. But to read literature, newspapers and books, three or four thousand Chinese ideograms have to be learned. Some 1500 to 2000 years ago when the Japanese were barbarians they got their first civilization from China by the advent of Buddhist priests, and with this came the Chinese language, so that the Japanese language has become a complication of the pure old Japanese, with the bulk of the Chinese vocabulary added to it and put into the Japanese grammatical and syntactical mould. The ideograms, too, are written in various styles, which further complicates matters for the foreign student. The meanings of the characters do not follow any logic, and the burden on the memory is terrible. You really have to change your way of thinking in acquiring Japanese.

The same set of circumstances will not bring forth the same remarks from a Japanese as from an American or European.

Differences in person, number or gender are understood from the context or the circumstances, and not generally expressed by change of word. The mood and tense of a sentence, however long it may be, can seldom be determined till the final verb which winds it up; the intermediate verbs are put in an indefinite form. Instead of our definite "I" or "you" and so on, there is used the implication of inferiority (the speaker) and superiority (the hearer), by means of honorific forms or qualifications of nouns, adjectives and verbs.

"Wash matter even forth comes not was" is about the literal English translation of the Japanese sentence used to indicate that "I could not wash my face and hands." "To unworthy house the honorable entrance is humbly requested" is the equivalent of "Please come to see me." The conductor of a street car or train calls out the name of the next stop, and then asks "Honorable alighting persons may there not be?" Then to the passengers about to come on board, who have been waiting while the alighting passengers got off, the conductor bows politely and says "Pardon is begged for the honorable wait." Also it should be stated that to the alighting passengers he calls out, "It is humbly requested that there be

no honorable forgotten articles."

Japan has been called topsy-turvy land because of the oppositeness of things to our way of thinking. Carpenter's tools work the opposite way, the saws and planes cut on the return stroke instead of the outstroke, the teeth and the blade being set the opposite way to our tools. Their books begin at the opposite end, and the writing is from right to left, and top to bottom. Addresses are thus written: U.S.A., California, Berkeley, Piedmont Avenue, 2422, Radin Paul Dr. In making out a bill the merchant puts the amount first, then the item, then the date. It is the tenant who gives the landlord the lease. In building a house they begin by making the roof. Their yes and no in some cases means just the opposite of ours. This gets beginners in Japan into lots of trouble as also does the fact that their answer to a negative question is the opposite of our way. They put a horse into the stall not head first but tail first, so that Barnum's horse with his head where his head ought to be is very common in Japan. We wave the hand in saying or indicating good-bye, but as this means "Come here" in Japan, it has produced much confusion, at trains and steamers, for unsophisticated foreigners, with their newmade Japanese friends. "Yoroshii" in the little Japanese conversation books sold to tourists is given as "all right" which is so at times, but

only at times, for often to the foreigner's dismay he finds his use of it is all wrong. "Ikaga desu ka" is given as the equivalent of "How are you?" when by itself it simply means "How is it?" i.e. How is the matter in which we are interested, or how is the house you are building progressing, or any other matter of present concern. It has reference to the health only if there is particular reason therefor, or the word health is expressed with it; because in Japan it is not customary to ask anybody and everybody on any and all occasions, as we do, how they are, meaning as to health.

But the Japanese have as much trouble with English as we have with Japanese. This is shown constantly in signs over stores, in advertisements and other matter put into English by Japanese who have no idea that the English they have acquired is quite incorrect. In Yokohama there appeared over the office of an express firm which wanted to capture the business of the foreigners off the steamers, the following sign: "Leave your luggage with us and we will send it in all directions." The difference in meaning between all and any was not understood evidently.

A young student who on one occasion missed meeting the writer, wrote a note of apology in which he said: "There is no excuse for you", not realizing that this English idiom really meant the opposite of "I have no excuse to offer you".

which was what he meant.

Really our English is very puzzling to Japanese. A Japanese student, for instance, does not understand why, if "woodshed" is a place to keep wood, "watershed" is not a place to keep water.

As a great deal of Japan is mountainous, one cannot travel far without seeing mountains, and much beautiful scenery like that of our Rocky Mountains or the Alps of Switzerland.

Japan is a land of dangers. Earthquakes occur frequently of sufficient intensity to shake houses and make doors and windows rattle, with now and then a disastrous one, in one part of the country or another.

On one missionary trip of some forty miles tramping over the mountains and down the valleys with my Japanese helpers, I experienced two sharp shocks of earthquake, several rainstorms with fierce lightning and heavy thunder (Japan is a very rainy country), and was involved in the tail end of a severe typhoon which came across the ridge of a mountain as we were climbing up the opposite side. The fierceness of the gale, with sharp icy hail, caused us to cling to trees to keep from being blown down the mountain. And we had to return the way we came, because of the impossibility of going against the storm. We were overtaken by darkness on the retreat and had difficulty

in getting to a little mountain inn some distance down the mountain side. But we were hospitably received after we managed to find our way in the darkness along the narrow, rough, and indistinct trail. They gave us dry Japanese kimonos and put our wet garments to dry, while preparing the hot bath, and a hot meal of the simple frugal mountain fare. We were too tired to mind the squeaking nezumi (mice) in the night, or the cries of owls, or even the bites of the numerous fleas. We were cheered greatly by a beautiful clear sunshiny morning, and the hearty well-wishes of our host and family as they sped us on our way.

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